

Jalalabad	Clear	Ghazni	Partly Cloudy	Kandahar	Clear	Mazar	Partly Cloudy	Herat	Partly Cloudy	Bamayan	Partly Cloudy	Kabul	Partly Cloudy
33°C 17°C		23°C 9°C		30°C 22°C		22°C 16°C		14°C 9°C		14°C 3°C		22°C 6°C	



Ghani Promises Personal Funds to Build Schools in Paktika

SHARAN - President Ashraf Ghani has pledged using his own funds for the construction of six schools in southeastern Paktika province. The president held out the pledge during a meeting with Paktika elders. Mahmood Sulaimankhel a lawmaker from the province, spoke on the behalf of the people. He said most roads linking districts with Sharan, the provincial capital, were blocked and no major uplift project had been implemented in the province. Mohammad Haroon Chakhanhuri, a senior official at the Presidential Palace, briefed the meeting on 72 uplift projects to be carried out in Paktika by different ministries. Ghani promised taking measures to reopen roads and improve the telecommunication system in the province. He said the construction of six schools



in as many districts would be launched soon. Of the 339 schools across the province, 26 are currently closed due to insecurity and militancy. But no school exists in Khoshmand district, where most of people are uneducated. (Pajhwok)

Russian will Persuade Taliban for Peace Talks: Karzai

KABUL - Former president Hamid Karzai, currently on a visit to Moscow, hopes Russia will persuade Taliban to join peace talks with Afghan government. In a meeting in Moscow late on Monday, Karzai and Russia Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov discussed the current security situation in Afghanistan and the region. Karzai hailed Russia's cooperation with the peace process in Afghanistan. He believed Russia's efforts for stability in Afghanistan would continue. Lavrov premised his country would help Afghanistan achieve peace and prosperity in line with Afghans' aspirations. Russia would spare any effort for the development of Afghanistan, he said. Afghan Ambassador Abdul Qayyum Kochi, ex-foreign minister Zahir Ahmad Moqbil and Abdul Karim Khurram were also present at the meeting, according to a statement from Karzai's office. (Pajhwok)

Arms Supply to Taliban: Russia Hits Back at US

KABUL - Russia has once again angrily rejected as unsubstantiated the US allegation that it is supplying arms to the Afghan Taliban. A day earlier, a US military official in Kabul was quoted as saying that Russia was providing machine guns and other medium-weight weapons to the Taliban. But Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov hit back at the Trump administration for what he called "unprofessional and groundless remarks". At a media briefing in Moscow, the foreign minister said the US accusations were intended to divert attention from its plans for a regime change in Syria. "I am confident that those in the United States who are ... (More on P4)...(11)

back Detainee Torture in Afghanistan Has Increased: HRW

KABUL - The torture of conflict-related detainees in Afghanistan has increased over the past two years despite President Ashraf Ghani's promise to end the practice, a rights group says. Thirty-nine percent of detainees were subjected to beatings, electric shocks, or near suffocation by police and intelligence agents, according to the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA). A senior Human Rights Watch researcher characterized the UNAMA report is a damning indictment of the government's failure to take effective action against torture. Patricia Gossman wrote in a dispatch UNAMA found in 2015-2016 the highest levels of torture of conflict-related detainees in police custody since it began monitoring detentions in 2010. The UN mission also alleged 45 percent of children detained in relation to the conflict were tortured or mistreated. Kandahar's police meted out the highest levels of abuse, torturing or mistreating 91 percent of detainees. The torture techniques included pumping water into detainees' stomachs, crushing their testicles with clamps, suffocating them to the point of losing consciousness and applying electric current to their genitals. At a meeting in Geneva on April 25, members of the Committee Against Torture asked the Afghan delegation why very few police were ever disciplined for abuse, and not a single senior intelligence officer had been prosecuted for torture. She said the committee's experts asked the ... (More on P4)...(14)

20 Militants Belonging to Taliban's Quetta Council Arrested in Kandahar

KANDAHAR - At least two insurgents belonging to Taliban's Quetta Council were arrested during an operation in southern Kandahar province of Afghanistan. The Afghan Intelligence, National Directorate of Security (NDS), said the militants were operating in four different groups directly under the command of Quetta Council. A statement by NDS said the militants were appointed to carry out a series of attacks in Kandahar city. The detained militants have confessed that they were tasked with the target killings, attack on civilian and military convoys belonging to the government, roadside bombings and other insurgency related activities, the statement added. The anti-government armed militant groups have not commented regarding the report so far. Kandahar is among the relatively calm provinces where the security situation had improved during the recent years but the anti-government armed militant groups have increased their insurgency activities in some of its districts during the recent months. This comes as a group of six militants involved in major terrorist attacks were arrested by the provincial intelligence directorate operatives in Kandahar earlier this month. According to the local officials, the group was planning and coordinating attacks on military bases, security check posts and logistics convoys and was also involved in the assassination of the government employees, tribal elders and other influential figures in Kandahar. (KP)

Over 18,000 Police Officers Killed in Helmand in 15 Years

KABUL - Helmand police headquarters said on Wednesday that almost 18,000 Afghan National Police (ANP) officers have been killed in battles in the southern province of Helmand over the past fifteen years. These officers and soldiers were killed in battles and thousands of heavy and light weapons also went missing in this time, said Aqa Noor Kentoz, Helmand police chief. Civil society activists and provincial council members have said the figure is shocking. "Eighteen thousand police officers have been killed over the past fifteen years and we honor the blood of each



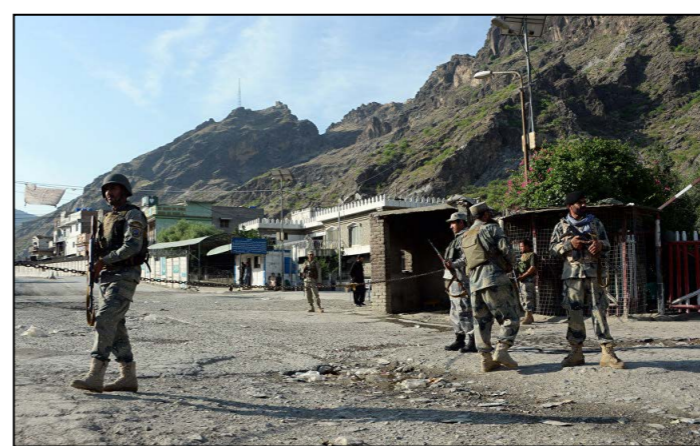
soldier, there have been wars for a long time, we are still committed to our mission against the militant Taliban," he said, Helmand residents have asked government to take action and save the soldiers. "Helmand war constitutes 40 percent ... (More on P4)...(12)

Project Irrigating 5,000 Hectare of Land Executed in Nimroz

ZARANJ - An irrigation project watering 5,000 hectares of land in the Chahar Burjak district of southwestern Nimroz province has been completed, an official said on Wednesday. Governor Mohammad Same told Pajhwok Afghan News the implementation of the project would help irrigate farmlands and pave the ground for promoting agriculture and enhancing growers' incomes. Eng. Mohammad Nabi Mahboob, head of Helmand river sub-basin in Zaranj, said the project would irrigate 5,000 hectares of land and benefit 5,000 families. The project cost 285 million afghanis that paid by the World Bank, he said, adding the 29 kilometres canal was built by the Ministry of Water and Energy in four phases over the past two years. Deputy Minister of Water and Energy Eng. Daud Safi asked residents of the area to take care of the project. A resident of the area of Khwabagh locality said implementation of the project was a long-awaited demand of the people. He said most residents of the area were reliant on farming but hardly had any access to irrigation water. However, he hoped the project would help create work opportunities and improve people's financial position. (Pajhwok)

Pakistan Urges Kabul to Intensify Crackdown on Cross-Border Terrorism

MOSCOW - Pakistan expects the Afghan government to do more in countering terrorist groups responsible for carrying out cross-border attacks and impacting Pakistan, the country's Defense Minister Khawaja Asif said at the ongoing VI Moscow Conference on International Security. The conference is taking place on Wednesday and Thursday. Its agenda includes combating against terrorism as well as security in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. "We expect the Afghan government to take more effective measures against the perpetrators responsible for various terrorist activities in Pakistan," Asif



said. He underlined that presence of terrorist networks on the Afghan border had been cleared during special operations carried out by Islamabad. Ongoing operations by Pakistan have been "extremely successful," which have been acknowledged by the international community, he added. "I would like to share that ... (More on P4)...(15)

Attack on Afghan Army Base Reportedly Killed over 250 Soldiers

ISLAMABAD - A private television station has reported last Friday's deadliest-ever assault by the Taliban on a major military base in northern Balkh province left more than 250 soldiers dead and accused authorities of "hiding the truth." The government has been under fire for refusing to reveal the number of casualties several days after the attack targeting the Afghan National Army's 209th Shaheen Corps in the provincial capital of Mazar-i-Sharif. The deputy chairman of the Afghan Senate, the upper



house of the parliament, informed lawmakers on Sunday that security officials told him the death toll stood at around 131, while provincial politicians had put it at more than 150 from the outset. "Based on information gathered from different sources, so far, the identity of 256 soldiers from 10 provinces have ... (More on P4)...(16)

Safety in Numbers: Afghanistan Turns to Russia for Security Assistance

KABUL - Afghanistan has asked Russia "to consider the possibility of providing service and logistical support to Afghanistan, as well as training personnel for the Afghan army and police," Afghan Foreign Ministry Spokesman Muhammad Ashraf Haidari told Sputnik Dari. The current situation in Afghanistan was high on the agenda of talks between Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and former Afghan President Hamid Karzai in Moscow on April 25. "Russia is sincerely interested in a country that's so friendly toward us in resolving its period of instability and focusing on providing for the prosperity of its people," Lavrov said. He added that the Russian side promotes "support for a national dialogue" and that "we are ready to use any format in order to provide support for external players in this process." Last Friday, US Central ... (More on P4)...(13)

Taliban Plant Landmines in Helmand Homes

LASHKARGAH - Families, who fled violence in areas around the capital of southern Helmand province, said on Wednesday they could not return to their homes due to fear of landmines. Haji Agha, a resident of Bolan area, told Pajhwok the Taliban had been in control of Bolan and Aynak areas for more than eight months before they were driven by the Afghan forces. He said security forces had retaken the mentioned areas from Taliban militants but the rebels had planted landmines on roads, streets and inside people's homes. Agha said some people who went to their homes had discovered landmines inside their houses. Abdullah, another resident, said the Taliban had planted landmines in every corner and now security forces were busy defusing the devices. Rozi Mohammad, yet another inhabitant, said Taliban militants had planted 19 landmines in his home. He said the rebels had planted four landmine in a mosque and all of the bombs had been defused. Meanwhile, senior police officer Col. Zahir Gul Muqbil acknowledged the Taliban had planted landmines in Bolan and Aynak areas. He said security forces were defusing the landmines and the areas would be cleared of ... (More on P4)...(17)